(b) the issues to be taken up by the Foreign Secretary during her forthcoming visit to Beijing to firm up plans for the visit of Chinese Premier; and

(c) the role of the Joint Working Group to be played during his visit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) There is an outstanding invitation for a visit by the Chinese Premier to India. Both sides are currently examining the possibility of scheduling this visit.

(b) and (c) Foreign Secretary's recent visit to Beijing was for the 13th meeting of the India-China Joint Working on the boundary question. During the meetings, bilateral issues were also discussed.

ISI'S Anti-India Propaganda

2651. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:
SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the diplomatic and internal security fall out of developments in Nepal;

(b) what precautionary steps have been taken by Government to meet any challenge from such a fall out;

(c) whether it is a fact that of late there has been spurt in the anti-India activities and malicious propaganda by ISI in Nepal; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken in consultation with the government to country and pre-empt such nefarious propaganda?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) Relations between India and Nepal have consistently been close reflecting the historical, geographical, cultural and linguistic bonds between the two. Frequent visits take place between the countries both at official and political levels providing regular opportunities to review our relations and give a direction to mutually beneficial bilateral co-operation. Efforts are made to ensure that events in one country do not in any way adversely affect the other. Government's endeavour has been and will always be to address the problems, which may crop up in any relationship as extensive as that between our two countries, expeditiously, amicably and consistent with the perceptions, concerns and aspirations of the peoples of the two countries.

(c) and (d) Government is concerned about vested interests misusing the Nepalese

territory and the Open India-Nepal border for activities inimical to India's interest and are seized of the matter. Governments of Nepal and India have agreed that they would not allow their territory to be abused by vested interests to launch activities inimical to the interests of either country. A bilateral institutional mechanism has also been evolved which includes the setting up of a Joint Working Group on Border Management and Home Secretary Level talks to jointly address issues relating to maintenance of peace and security in the India-Nepal border areas.

Revival of Cricket between India and Pakistan

†2652. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Cricket relations between India and Pakistan are being revived again;

(b) if so, by when the deadlock would be removed to start matches between the two countries; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c) Indian Cricket Team has been playing with the Pakistani Cricket Team in multilateral tournaments. The team played the Pakistan team in several multilateral series last year.

Modernisation of Passport services

2653. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the demand for the passport services is on increase because of impact of globalisation: and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken by Government to modernise the passport services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It is the Government's constant endeavour to modernise passport services and the measures taken by the Government in this regard are: computerisation of processing procedures, simplification of passport and miscellaneous services forms, decentralisation of passport services to enable submission at the district level,

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.